

queen to spread the Tynan carpets for her lord,
 and then, as
 he lay couched in the marble bath, to throw over
 his head the
 purple net, and call to her smooth-faced lover to
 stab through
 the meshes at the heart that should have
 broken at Aulis.
 For Antigone even, with Death waiting for her as
 her bride-
 groom, it was easy to pass through the tainted air
 at noon, and
 climb the hill, and strew with kindly earth the
 wretched naked
 corse that had no tomb. But what of those who
 wrote about
 these things ? What of those who gave them
 reality, and made
 them live for ever? Are they not greater than the
 men and
 women they sing of? "Hector that sweet knight is
 dead," and
 Lucian tells us how in the dim under-world
 Menippus saw the
 bleaching skull of Helen, and marvelled that it
 was for so grim
 a favour that all those horned ships were
 launched, those
 beautiful mailed men laid low, those towered cities
 brought to
 dust. Yet, every day the swanlike daughter of
 Leda comes
 out on the battlements, and looks down at the
 tide of war.
 The greybeards wonder at her loveliness, and she
 stands by the
 side of the king. In his chamber of stained ivory
 lies her leman.
 He is polishing h(s) dainty armour, and combing
 the scarlet
 plume. With squire and page, her husband
 passes from tent
 to tent. She can see his bright hair, and hears, or
 fancies that
 she hears, that clear cold voice. In the courtyard
 below, the
 son of Priam is buckling on his brazen cuirass.
 The white
 arms of Andromache are around his neck. He
 sets his helmet
 on the ground, lest their babe should be
 frightened. Behind
 the embroidered curtains of his pavilion sits
 Achilles, in per-
 fumed raiment, while in harness of gilt and silver
 the friend of
 his soul arrays himself to go forth to the fight.
 From a
 curiously carved chest that his mother Thetis
 had brought to
 his ship-side, the Lord of the Myrmidons takes out
 that mystic
 chalice that the lip of man had never touched,
 and cleanses
 it with brimstone, and with fresh water cools it,
 and, having
 washed his hands, fills with black wine its
 burnished hollow,
 and spills the thick grape-blood upon the
 ground in honour
 of Him whom at Dodona barefooted prophets
 worshipped, and
 prays to Him, and knows not that he prays in
 vain, and that
 by the hands of two knights from Troy,
 Panthous* son,
 Euphorbus, whose love-locks were looped with
 gold, and the
 Priamid, the lion-hearted, Patroklus, the comrade
 of comrades,
 must meet his doom. Phantoms, are they?
 Heroes of mist
 and mountain? Shadows in a song? No: they

are real.
Action! What is action? It dies at the moment of
its energy.